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ABSTRACT

This handbook focuses on parent, student, and staff responsibilities as they relate to the achievement of an excellent and equitable education for all students. Equity should be a major concern of all schools as an approach to teaching that extends through the grades. Responsibilities are listed for school staff members (administrators and teachers); parents; students; and school staff members, parents, and students collectively. Effective school programs contain the following key equity components: (1) equity should permeate the entire 13 years of a student's school experience and the entire curriculum; (2) equity should be a part of all courses offered in schools; (3) instructional styles of teachers and practices of administrators should reflect a concern for equity; (4) staff training in equity is necessary; (5) educational materials must reflect a concern for equity; and (6) frequent review and evaluation should be conducted to ensure that education is preparing students to become responsible and unbiased citizens. A 40-item list of references, a glossary, and a summary of nine Federal non-discrimination laws and court cases are appended. (SLD)

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ED 337505

THE FOURTH R: RESPONSIBILITY

A HANDBOOK FOR SCHOOL STAFF

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Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory
Center for National Origin, Race and Sex Equity
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THE FOURTH R: RESPONSIBILITY

A HANDBOOK FOR SCHOOL STAFF

To Promote School-Home Relations
and Educational Equity

Developed by

Center for National Origin, Race and Sex Equity

Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory
Portland, Oregon

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PREFACE

The common purpose of our nation's public schools is to provide all students with the opportunity to

- learn
- learn how to learn
- use what is learned to acquire greater awareness of themselves and others
- develop attitudes that are fundamental to functioning as responsible and contributing citizens

Schools and the educational process foster personal growth and critical thinking, and comprise a significant element of socialization.

Schools cannot accomplish their purpose by themselves. Even though the schools play a significant socialization role, the greater influence on a student's development comes from the home. The goals of public education can be either supported or undermined by the home and the degree of cooperation between parents and school personnel. Disharmony or antipathy between home and school places the student in the middle and could result in confusion or rebelliousness on her or his part. If each member of the school community acknowledges, understands and accepts individual and joint responsibilities, then the goals of public education will be met.

The focus of this handbook will be parent, student and staff responsibilities as they relate to the achievement of an excellent and equitable education for all students. We believe that individual and collective fulfillment of respective responsibilities will guarantee rights, assure equity and enhance student performance.

We have chosen to identify the members of the school community as administrators, teachers, students and parents. (In all cases, "parents" is intended as a term that includes non-parental legal and temporary guardians.) Doing so is not intended to diminish the important contributions of community organizations, social service agencies, businesses and other groups to the overall educational process. Instead, we will focus on the four groups which assume the greatest day-to-day responsibility for students' learning and behavior.

This handbook is intended as a resource for school staff to increase their awareness, but it may be shared in part or in whole with parents and students. The suggestions herein, particularly with regard to school personnel, are not exhaustive. They do not provide complete guidelines for being a good teacher, a good administrator, a good parent, or a good student. Rather, the suggestions are intended to be concrete ideas on educational equity within the context of basic ideas for good schooling.

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INTRODUCTION

Research into effective schooling practices indicates that in order to help students be successful learners, school systems need to address three primary areas of responsibility.

First, at the district level, educators need to create "an environment in which the pursuit of instructional effectiveness is valued. Clear and stable policies, expectations for improvement, and strong systems of support help schools become more effective."[1]

Second, at the school level, staff must work to create a healthy awareness that "the school is more than a collection of people, subjects and grade levels, and that the qualities of the school as a whole can either enhance or detract from the classroom learning environment. Clear expectations, consistency and collaboration among adults, strong instructional leadership and a central focus on learning are important in pursuing instructional effectiveness."[2]

Finally, and most important, at the classroom level, teachers need to create the understanding that "learning is an individual process shaped in the classroom. On a daily basis, teachers and students work together in a dynamic, interactive process. Thoroughly planned lessons, focused instruction and positive classroom management increase the probability of student success."[3]

For students to be well-balanced as well as well-trained individuals, another element is crucial. They must be offered equal educational opportunity regardless of their race, sex or national origin. Educational opportunity encompasses what is taught, how it's taught and how students are treated. The element of equal opportunity for all students is called **equity** and is everyone's responsibility.

Equity should be a major concern of all schools. For 25 years researchers, advisory commissions, writers and others concerned about fair treatment of students, legislation and court rulings have recommended or mandated changes in public education designed to accommodate the needs and rights of all students. Even so, problems of bias, prejudice, discrimination, intolerance, harassment and complacency persist. Whether the bias is overt or subtle, unconscious or intentional, personal

or institutional, it requires the immediate and dedicated attention of everyone concerned with social justice and the well-being of young people.

Court rulings have supported the legislation enacted to provide equal opportunities in education, but laws alone cannot bring about true equity. The letter and spirit of the law must be reflected in a school district's mission and policies and have the unequivocal support of parents, administrators, teachers, and students.

Several common misperceptions tend to retard progress toward educational equity. They include:

- Equity has already been achieved—remediation is unnecessary.
- Equity is an impossible goal—too many factors and forces militate against it.
- Equity is time consuming—with all that schools already are expected to do, they don't have time for equity too.

In actuality, however, equity has not been attained—many problems still exist; equity is not impossible—people of good will do not see the problems as unsurmountable; and equity is not time-consuming—it is an approach to education, not something to be added to the school day.

KEY COMPONENTS OF EDUCATIONAL EQUITY

Access. Legislation alone cannot establish equal access to schools, courses and activities. Access problems still occur even though virtually all districts have taken measures to come into compliance with nondiscrimination laws. Equal access mean more than the provision of equal courses, facilities and programs. It means taking into consideration the different needs of students, some of whom will require special educational programs in order to access the curricular offerings of a school.

Equal access ensures, for example, that:

- students of limited-English proficiency acquire language skills to benefit from instruction in the classrom while at the same time achieving appropriate academic levels

- females and minorities are provided the support to encourage their enrollment in higher level mathematics, science and computer courses, which are still predominantly White male

- all students, regardless of race, sex or socio-ecomonic status are valued, encouraged and provided the environment to succeed and grow to their fullest potential

Disproportionality, if it exists, may not be intentional on the part of the school, but school personnel need to assess what might be happening in the school to contribute to it.

Attitudes. Attitudes are not created or changed by law or policies. The school and parents can take measures to encourage positive attitudes among all persons connected with the educational process. All students, parents and staff are entitled to respect and positive personal regard. Biased or prejudiced attitudes against individuals or groups are unacceptable. They can also lead to discriminatory treatment.

Language. Language is one of the most powerful influences in the development or reinforcement of attitudes. Bias occurs in language both in vocabulary and in usage. Use of the so-called generic masculine occupational titles and pronouns presents an unreal picture of the world of work as it is and limits aspirations because everyone, especially young people, take language literally. Further, language can be used in such a way to convey biased or ethnocentric attitudes as in calling cavalry triumphs victories but Indian triumphs massacres.

Interactions. A large body of research documents the influence teachers can wield in their interactions with students. Findings include:

- Male students receive more teaching attention than female students.[4]
- Teachers tell and expect males to do tasks but often assist and do these same tasks for females.[5]
- Students are less likely to learn from a teacher who doesn't expect them to learn.[6]
- Students who are asked only "easy" questions don't have an opportunity to develop fully their intellectual skills.[7]
- Students who are not given enough time to answer questions have less opportunity to demonstrate their abilities, and research shows that teachers generally give less answering time to students for whom they have low expectations.[8]

- Classroom organization patterns reflect how teachers expect students to work and play, and when these are based on sex, race or national origin groupings, they reinforce a sense of the idea of "opposites" and minimize opportunities for students to learn from each other.[9]

- Groups which are mixed according to race, national origin, sex and ability levels promote more positive attitudes and social behavior than those which are not.[10]

- Teachers' physical closeness to students during classroom interactions relates directly to how they rate students' ability and to students' self-worth.[11]

- Students' attitudes and social behavior are more positive when they perceive teachers as having a balanced approach in reacting to student behavior.[12]

- Disciplinary action taken by teachers is sometimes based on factors other than misbehavior. Discipline based on sex or cultural biases is especially harmful and may be one of the most subtle forms of discrimination in the educational system. Research shows that, in general, males receive more criticism and punishment than females, and that Black, Hispanic and low-income White males receive the most referrals, suspensions and expulsions.[13]

- The lack of minority teachers and principals is linked to the disproportionately high number of minority student suspensions.[14]

- In many schools, only four or five teachers make approximately 80 percent of suspension referrals.[15]

- Minorities are overrepresented among disability group placements.[16]

- The messages students receive about their sex, race or national origin greatly influence how they perceive their own worth and how others perceive them.[17]

- In a collaborative classroom environment, students can develop their potential with fewer restrictions imposed by sex, race or national origin-based expectations.[18]

Most teachers are unaware that they may treat students differently based on their sex, race, national origin or other group identity. Many who have participated in interactions training have begun using alternative, equitable teaching methods.

Disparities may also occur in interactions between administrators and others. Administrators may unwittingly leave certain teachers out of educational or policy discussions, or give positive or negative feedback to some teachers, but not to others who may need it. Without realizing it, the principal may, by giving more attention, be favoring teachers who she or he perceives to be high achievers or are of an ethnicity or sex with which the principal is more uncomfortable.

Parents may feel uncomfortable dealing with a teacher or an administrator who is of a different ethnicity or sex (or perhaps the same sex). Such discomfort may make the parent avoid interacting with the school, or assume hostility on the part of school staff when there may be none.

Instruction. Instruction includes but extends beyond materials, interactions and language. Although teachers are required to follow the adopted texts in planning their lessons, they have latitude in how the material is presented, what is emphasized, what assignments are given and the supplemental materials used. Lack of awareness of equity concepts could result in promoting a biased perspective.

Materials. Materials reflect bias in their content, pictures and/or language. By using materials-evaluation instruments, reviewers can determine whether minorities, females or males are:[19]

- Left out or ignored
- Inaccurately represented
- The subject of ridicule or the butt of jokes or insults
- Discussed in a stereotypic way
- Given scattered coverage
- Presented as figures without authority
- Romanticized, i.e., their "colorful" characteristics emphasized and their experience of injustice and suffering played down
- Represented in images and perspectives that encourage discrimination

Many supplemental materials such as library books, posters and audiovisual materials are dated and not sensitive to equity issues. Teaching students to recognize bias in existing written and visual materials contributes to their critical thinking skills and eliminates consideration of censorship.

CONCLUSION

Some teachers, administrators and parents may question the need for teaching the principles of equity on the grounds that there are no minorities in the class or school or that it threatens traditional male and female roles. This view is shortsighted and confining. The teaching of equity principles and equitable teaching practices benefits all students, not just those who have suffered from or practiced overt and subtle bias. Because we live in a culturally pluralistic society, all students will need healthy interpersonal skills in order to function successfully. At present, most of the people who are fired from their jobs are fired because of poor interpersonal skills rather than poor job skills.

Minorities and women are entering an ever-increasing range of occupations, and White males no longer constitute a majority of the workforce. Healthy, positive attitudes will serve to reduce discrimination in employment practices, malicious racial and sexual harassment, and the discomfort of not knowing how to communicate with persons different from oneself. Such benefits will extend to personal interactions and relationships outside the workforce, resulting in mutual trust and respect among all people.

Equity is not a separate subject to be added to an already-busy curriculum. Teachers can create lessons which explore equity concepts in any subject area, but beyond that, equity needs to be integrated into all teaching. It is an approach to teaching that begins in kindergarten and continues through the twelfth grade. An equitable approach to teaching will help to create an encouraging and caring learning environment that allows students to feel comfortable and permits them to examine their attitudes and share their ideas.

As important as the teacher's role is, the development of equitable attitudes in young people is a responsibility that is shared by administrators and parents. Parents are still the dominant influence in socialization, and their children will have a far greater chance of being treated equitably and developing equitable attitudes if such attitudes are modeled in the home.

The habits and attitudes learned while in school will carry over into adulthood. But education is a part of life, not just preparation for life. Students at all levels are entitled to an educational environment that embraces them regardless of their physical, economic, academic or social characteristics. If schools and society at large can master the simple concept of responding to people by what they do not who they are, we will have reached a new plateau of civilization. Such a goal is attainable so long as people of good will continue to work together.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The lists of respective responsibilities that follow begin with basic good schooling tenets. The suggestions in the latter part of each list, shown in bold, comprise equity principles.

SCHOOL STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

School administrators and teachers are living examples of responsibility in action; they are expected to represent themselves to students, parents and the community as models of competence and civility. Listed below are key responsibilities of school administrators and teachers for creating an effective and equitable school environment.[20]

Administrators

1. Establish and maintain a safe, orderly school environment.

2. Keep physical facilities clean and reasonably attractive; repair damage immediately.

3. Provide a written code of conduct which specifies acceptable student behavior, due process and discipline procedures and consequences.

4. Administer punishment in a neutral, matter-of-fact way; focus punishment on a student's behavior, not on his or her personality. Refrain from administering unreasonable punishment to students.

5. Have all staff promote high expectations for students' achievement. Create an environment in which all students are expected to work hard toward the attainment of learning goals.

6. Provide processes for monitoring the school's ongoing instructional efforts. Work to establish an environment in which no one is complacent about student achievement, and where a positive attitude toward change is encouraged.

7. Train and work with parents to improve their children's academic skills and attitudes toward education.

8. Provide parents of adolescents with information about the physical, emotional and academic development of that age group.

9. Arrange programs and activities around parents' work, day care and transportation needs.

10. Provide leadership and intervention in retention and re-entry programs for dropouts and operate programs in a setting that focuses on improving student self-esteem and motivation to complete their education.

11. Set concrete goals for "at-risk" students early in their school careers. Progress needs to be measured against these goals.

12. ***Provide opportunities for staff to be thoroughly trained in equity principles; participate in such training.***

13. ***Make sure that all visuals in the school reflect human diversity.***

14. ***Encourage schoolwide participation in "commemorative" days, weeks and months, such as Martin Luther King Day, National American Indian Day, Hispanic Heritage Week, Black History Month, and Women's History Month.***

15. ***Use nonbiased language.***

16. ***Apply equity principles when dealing with staff members.***

17. ***Be responsive to parent, teacher and student concerns about perceived inequities in materials, programs or interactions.***

18. ***Train students and teachers in the damaging effects of malicious racial or sexual harassment, including verbal harassment. Establish a policy against such behavior. Make staff and students aware that such behavior will not be tolerated.***

19. ***Be diligent in carrying out state and federal mandates for nondiscrimination in the areas of race, sex and national origin in all school programs and activities.***

Teachers

1. Maintain good order and discipline in the classroom and school at all times. Set high standards and be consistent.

2. Provide an optimum learning atmosphere with learning goals that are both challenging and attainable. Help students get ready to learn. Allow and encourage students to develop a sense of responsibility and self-reliance. Give them a variety of opportunities to complete (guided and independent) practice of new concepts and skills.

3. Continuously strive to improve teaching performance and use assessment results not only to evaluate students, but also to find out whether teaching methods are working.

4. Let parents know that homework is important and give them tips on how to monitor homework assignments. Assign homework with the intent of successful completion. Check students' work and give quick feedback.

5. Check students' understanding of material presented by asking clear questions and make sure all students have equal time to respond.

6. Pay attention to student interests, problems and accomplishments in social interactions both in and out of the classroom.

7. Communicate positively and frequently with students and parents by phone or short notes about the student's progress in school, including academic achievement, social behavior and attitude. Develop skills for working with parents. Make parents welcome and invite them to become involved in their children's education. Establish clear procedures for involvement, communicate these clearly to parents, and use them consistently.

8. ***Expand expectations of students from non-English-speaking backgrounds and develop a commitment to provide effective instruction appropriate to the background of these students as early as possible in their school careers.***

9. ***Work to increase the participation of females and minorities in elementary and secondary curriculum and in courses related to occupations in which they are underrepresented (e.g., math, engineering, science).***

10. ***Teach students about stereotypes and prejudice and how to recognize the bias that may exist in the materials they use in school.***

11. ***Compensate for or supplement biased materials in the classroom.***

12. ***Serve on textbook adoption committees or find other ways to influence the selection of nonbiased curriculum materials.***

13. ***Make sure that all visuals in the classroom reflect human diversity.***

14. ***Do not segregate students by sex at any time—lines, study groups, or activities. (It is assumed grouping by race is not allowed.)***

15. ***Use nonbiased language.***

16. ***Attempt to use role models of both sexes and of different ethnicities when bringing resource people into the classroom.***

17. ***Take advantage of opportunities to be trained in recognizing and dealing with bias.***

Administrators and teachers can enhance relations with students' families and the community at large by simply:

- being accessible to parents
- returning telephone calls in a timely fashion
- resolving problems at an informal level whenever possible

An equitable school climate coupled with good relations with students' families and the community at large cannot help but create a positive learning environment for students.

PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Adults both in and out of the classroom exert powerful influences on children's learning and other experiences. Thus, the relationship between school and home plays a significant role in meeting the purpose of schools. In order to develop an effective school-home relationship, school staff and families need to know what they can expect from each other and who is responsible for the different aspects of students' development.

Most school staff believe good school-home relations are important, but sometimes find it difficult to involve some parents in the school. Staff need to be aware of any expectations they may have that could hinder effective collaboration with parents. For example, they may have negative expectations of certain families because of family composition, economic status or racial identity. On the other hand, parents may have negative attitudes toward schools, or, even though they want to be involved in their children's education, they may be dissuaded by obstacles such as feelings of intimidation or the day-to-day-pressures of earning a living and maintaining a family.

School staff and parents can work together to find ways to provide an effective, positive learning climate for all students. If each understands and accepts his or her responsibilities, such a climate can be created.

Handbooks on student rights and responsibilities very often need to include statements or suggestions of parents' responsibility. The suggestions listed below are common sense recommendations of key responsibilities parents have for their children's education:[21]

1. See that children attend school and classes regularly and on time and that they have the necessary materials.

2. See that children attend school physically and mentally healthy, well rested, clean and appropriately dressed.

3. Assure that assigned homework is completed and presented on time and in an acceptable form.

4. Be responsible for children's behavior and make restitution for any damage caused by them.

5. Become informed about programs, issues and needs of the school and district.

6. Work cooperatively with school staff to prevent or resolve problems.

7. Seek and take advantage of access to schools and become involved in children's education. Attend conferences with teachers.

8. Learn how to prepare children for the future by fostering academic skills and positive attitudes toward education, the school and themselves.

9. Hold teachers and schools accountable for meeting goals related to improving academic performance. If goals are not met, work with school personnel to analyze the situation and plan corrective action.

10. Be aware of children's needs and praise their successes in order to help them continue working toward excellence.

11. Ensure that grievances are resolved. If a grievance arises, either related to the treatment of a child, or to district policies and practices, pursue the issue according to established procedures. Work to solve problems at the most informal level first, then, if necessary, pursue the grievance to higher levels of district administration. Whenever possible, avoid involving the child in the conflict. Call ahead to set appointments with relevant staff.

12. Respect the rights of school staff, students and other parents.

13. ***Teach children to appreciate people by what they do, not who they are.***

14. ***Provide children with opportunities to see and interact in a positive way with people who are different from themselves.***

15. ***Use nonbiased language at home.***

16. ***Teach children about bias, how to recognize it and how it limits and demeans people.***

17. ***Examine textbooks and other materials for bias; point it out to teachers and administrators and express concern.***

18. ***Become involved in the textbook selection process at the point public comment is invited.***

19. ***Contact the school if bias is encountered in any interactions between a staff member and a child. Follow the grievance procedure described in #11 above.***

20. ***Be careful not to set negative expectations for a child by saying in her or his presence such things as "She'll probably have trouble in math, I always did," or ""Watch out for him; he'll take the roof off the school if he gets mad."***

The most important task parents have is to teach children to be responsible and allow them to assume age-appropriate responsibilities. Parents need to ensure that they—not television, peers or others—are their children's principal teachers.

With sweeping technological changes, increased global economic competition, declining or static student achievement and increased dropout rates, school personnel are seeking ways to increase student performance by making adjustments in the curriculum, teaching strategies and standards for students and teachers. They also are turning their attention increasingly to the role parents can play and the responsibilities parents can and want to share with the schools.

Below are several ways parents can be involved in school activities and the education of children and monitor the equal educational opportunities guaranteed by law:

- **Serve on school boards**. Studies show that when minorities and women are represented on the school board, the school tends to be more sensitive to concerns of hiring, discipline and achievement and to the provision of equity in education.[22]

- **Vote for school issues**. When minorities and women participate in the election of school boards and levies that reflect equity in education, better school-community relationships result.[23]

- **Work as school volunteers**. When parents work as aides or volunteers in a school or classroom, they gain a clearer picture of the structure, content and equity of the school's educational program(s).

- **Attend meetings and special events**. By attending parent-teacher and board meetings, special assemblies or extracurricular events, and observing in schools or classrooms, parents increase their understanding of what is occurring in schools.

When parents are able to participate in one or more of the above activities, they increase their capacity for responsible involvement. Studies of minority families point out that if parents believe they can influence the lives of their children, they are far more likely to support the work of the school and their children's learning efforts.

If parents do not serve on school boards, vote, volunteer in or visit schools, the most important thing they still can do is to discuss with their children, on a daily basis, what is happening in the school and classroom—what is good, exciting and helpful and what might be harmful or limiting. In conjunction with the school, they can then determine what might be done to improve those situations which are interfering with their child's personal growth and academic excellence.

In order to become effectively involved, parents need to know not only what their responsibilities are (legal and otherwise), but also what schools must do to educate their children, as well as what their children must do in order to gain the most out of the education to which they are entitled. It is only when parents understand what responsibilities others have for their children's education that they can make certain that others involved in the schooling process are carrying out their respective responsibilities.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

This list of student responsibilities includes items usually found in student handbooks[24] and which, when accepted and practiced, can constitute a significant contribution to an effective and equitable learning climate. Listed below are key responsibilities students have for their own education:

1. Attend all classes every day on time; have the necessary learning materials and be ready to work.

2. Dress appropriately for school—in ways that will not cause safety or health problems, or disruptions.

3. Use class time for learning; make a determined effort to learn.

4. Be accountable for academic work. If unable to finish work/assignments during class, then work on lessons before or after school, during lunch, or at some other time to keep up with the class.

5. Respect the rights of others to teach and learn.

6. Be fully and positively involved in the school's academic and extracurricular programs.

7. Exhibit conduct that promotes good health, acceptable standards of behavior, effective citizenship and a positive attitude toward learning.

8. Know and obey the rules of the school district and individual school.

9. Respect the reasonable exercise of authority by school administrators and teachers in maintaining discipline in the schools and at school-sponsored activities.

10. Accept reasonable punishment for breaking school rules.

11. Respect the property of other people and of the school; pay for damaged property.

12. Pursue disagreements with school policy or procedures in an orderly and responsible manner. Work with school personnel

to solve problems. Set and keep appointments with relevant school staff.

13. ***Appreciate personal differences in people.***

14. ***Interact in a positive way with people who are different from oneself.***

15. ***Use nonbiased language at school, at home and in the community.***

16. ***Know how to recognize bias and how it limits and demeans people.***

Parents and school staff have the added responsibility of making certain that all students understand what is expected of them and of taking reasonable measures to ensure that students understand their roles.

COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITIES

The previous sections discussed and highlighted the respective responsibilities of parents, students, teachers, and administrators for carrying out education's purpose—to develop the potential of every student. Additional responsibilities which are shared by parents, students and schools are referred to as **collective** responsibilities and include the following elements:

1. Everyone acknowledges that school is a place for work.

2. Students, parents and staff know the written code of conduct.

3. No students are expected to fall below the level of learning needed to be successful at the next level.

4. Extra learning time is provided for students who need or want it; students can get extra help outside regular school hours.

5. Mastery—not age—guides promotion from grade to grade.

6. Programs meet the needs of the whole child within the context of school, family and community.

7. "Soft" courses are kept to a minimum. Problem solving, analysis, interpretation, persuasive writing and learning to learn should be considered among the "basics."

8. Education focuses on employability rather than mere vocationalism. Employability requires problem solving skills, command of the English language, the ability to acquire and apply new knowledge, and adaptability; whereas, the focus of vocationalism is job-specific skills.

9. The core subjects comprise a common set of concepts, principles, skills and ways of knowing.

10. ***Instruction leading to second language proficiency for limited-English-proficient students is integrated into the overall curriculum, not set apart.***

11. ***Respect and consideration are shown to everyone regardless of race, national origin or sex. Opportunities are***

provided for all children to achieve maximum intellectual growth and development regardless of their ethnic background or sex.

12. ***Everyone makes a conscious commitment to confront and compensate for their own biases. Adults keep in mind that they were raised and socialized in a biased environment and may unwittingly demonstrate biased attitudes.***

13. ***Adults and children do not condone biased or prejudiced behaviors in others.***

The responsibilities enumerated in this handbook provide a basis for all groups concerned to discuss and clarify their respective roles in the educational process. Increased awareness and understanding of individual and collective responsibilities cannot help but provide a basis for improved school-home relations and increased learning.

SUMMARY

A child's years in school provide new and exciting opportunities for personal growth, an appreciation for scholarship, the acquisition of knowledge and a deep respect for other individuals. Effective school programs contain several key equity components:

- The need for equity to permeate the entire 13 years of a student's education and the entire curriculum. No one week, quarter or year program can sufficiently raise a student's understanding of equity issues.
- The need for equity to be a part of all courses offered in the school. Educational equity needs to be taught outside the social studies courses—in English, math, athletics, and so on.
- The need for equity to be reflected in the instructional styles of teachers and the ways in which administrative decisions are made and carried out.
- The need for well-planned and ongoing staff training for teachers and administrators. Everyone needs to learn to incorporate educational equity into the school and classroom goals.
- The need to use updated and nonbiased textbooks and teaching materials.
- The need to review and evaluate materials and techniques on a regular basis to ensure that students are receiving an education that will enable them to become responsible and unbiased citizens.

NOTE

The Center for National Origin, Race and Sex Equity at the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory provides training and technical assistance free of charge to public school personnel in all equity related areas. The Center is located at 101 S.W. Main, Suite 500, Portland, Oregon 97204 and may be reached by calling (503) 275-9603.

Center staff include:

Dr. Ethel Simon-McWilliams, Director
Alfredo Aragon, Field Services Coordinator/Equity Specialist
Barbara K. Berard, Materials/Information Specialist
Valerie Orona, Administrative Secretary
Deborah Shaw/Moilan, Secretary

Equity Staff for Alaska
Carole Hunt
Sharron Lobaugh

Equity Staff for Idaho, Oregon and Washington
Alfredo Aragon
Carlos Cardona-Morales
Nancy Huppertz

Equity Staff for the Pacific
Doris Calkum
Clarise Mason
Dr. Flora Yen
Bill Plott, Secretary

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: REFERENCES

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APPENDIX B

DEFINITIONS

Socialization. Socialization is a lifelong process by which people are prepared to occupy various roles in society. Socialization is achieved through the provision and accumulation of life experiences that transmit knowledge, attitudes and skills to perform functions necessary for these roles. Socialization is often deliberate and readily observable as children are being prepared to carry out a complex collection of economic, social, physical, political and psychological roles as adults. However, most socialization is subtle and goes unnoticed.

Stereotype. A stereotype is an oversimplified perception in which individuals are ascribed certain traits merely because of their membership in a specific group, race or sex.

Prejudice/Bias. Prejudice and bias are attitudes which predispose an individual to make either negative or positive judgements about persons, objects, concepts or groups prior to objective evaluation.

Discrimination. Discrimination is the differential treatment of individuals considered to belong to a particular group, and includes the denial of opportunity, privilege, role or reward on the basis of sex, race, national origin or other factors. Prejudice is an attitude; discrimination is its manifestation.

Sex Role Stereotype. A sex-role stereotype assumes that all females or all males share common abilities, interests, values and roles. In the context of schools, the term refers to practices, activities and materials that prescribe the development of girls and boys and prepare them for traditional and often limiting sex roles.

Sexism. Sexism is any attitude, action or institutional practice which functions to subordinate a person or group because of their sex. The control of institutional power distinguishes sexism from individual bias.

Racism. Racism is any attitude, action or institutional practice which functions to subordinate a person or group because of their color. The control of institutional power distinguishes racism from individual prejudice.

Educational Equity. Educational equity refers to the elimination in educational institutions, programs and curricula of discrimination on the basis of race, national origin or sex and of those elements of role stereotyping and role socialization that prevent full and fair participation by all students in educational programs. Educational equity is concerned with the elimination of stereotyping so that all students can choose freely among and benefit from opportunities in educational institutions and programs, with limitations determined only by each individual's interests and abilities.

APPENDIX C

NONDISCRIMINATION IN EDUCATION: A SUMMARY OF THE MAJOR FEDERAL NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act prohibits discrimination against students on the basis of race, color, or national origin in programs receiving federal funds.

Title VI and related case law prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin in student admissions, student access to courses and programs, and student policies and their application, to name a few of the areas covered. Discrimination against national origin minorities on the basis of limited English skills is also prohibited by Title VI case law. Any institution or agency receiving federal funds is covered by Title VI. Most educational activities of a recipient agency or institution are covered, including activities or programs not in direct receipt of federal funds. It was the language of Title VI which provided the model for Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972.

Procedures for the filing of possible complaints regarding racial or ethnic discrimination are provided under the legislation. Such complaints may be filed with The Office for Civil Rights, Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20202, or the Regional Office for Civil Rights, or your state department of education.

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972

Title IX prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex against students and employees in educational programs and activities receiving federal funds. The Title IX regulation prohibits sex discrimination in such areas as:

- Admissions to vocational, graduate, professional and public undergraduate schools
- Counseling and guidance tests, materials and practices
- Physical education and athletics
- Vocational education programs

- Student rules and policies
- Extracurricular activities
- Employment

Complaints of Title IX violations may be filed with The Office for Civil Rights, Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20202, or the Regional Office for Civil Rights, or your state department of education.

Guidelines for Eliminating Discrimination and Denial of Services on the Basis of Race, Color, National Origin, Sex and Handicap in Vocational Education

These guidelines apply to recipients of any federal financial assistance that offer or administer programs of vocational education or training. They derive from and provide guidance supplementary to Title VI, Title IX, and Section 504 and the implementing departmental regulations.

Complaints of violations of this legislation may be filed with The Office for Civil Rights, Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20202, or the Regional Office for Civil Rights, or your state department of education.

Antidiscrimination laws can be viewed as continuing clarifications of human rights guaranteed in the U.S. Constitution and its various amendments.

The Equal Protection Clause of the 14th Amendment

The U.S. Constitution makes only one reference to equality. In the Fourteenth Amendment the following clause appears:

> ". . . nor shall any State . . . deny to any person within its jurisdiction, the equal protection of the laws."

This clause, known as the Equal Protection Clause, guarantees the equality of citizens and noncitizens alike under the law. It became law in 1868, right after the Civil War, and was designed to make certain that newly freed slaves would not be discriminated against; that is, that no state would make or administer any law differently for those who had been slaves as compared to those who had not. The Fourteenth Amendment also makes clear that women and minorities are citizens. When the Constitution was first written, only White landowning males were considered citizens.

Brown v. Board of Education

In Brown v. Board of Education in 1954, the U.S. Supreme Court accepted the argument that segregation in schools was a violation of the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. It was essentially the same argument that had been made more than 50 years before in Plessy v. Ferguson, but, for the first time, the court looked beyond the intent to discriminate and founded its opinion on the harmful effects on black children that resulted from separate educational facilities. As a result of these effects, the Court said black people were deprived of equal protection under the law.

This decision marked the critical turning point in the Court's application of the Equal Protection Clause and we are still feeling the effects of the Court's mandate to desegregate schools "with all deliberate speed."

Civil Rights Act 1964

Brown set a precedent, but equal education has been a long time coming. Recognizing that school segregation was an ugly fact, Congress enacted the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The purpose of this act was desegregation of public schools.

With the Brown v. Board of Education litigation came the awareness that many national origin students in nonsegregated settings were still not given equal educational opportunity. This awareness promoted the inclusion of the term "national origin" in the original version of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 was closely followed by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, which provided funds for special programs for children from low income families (Title I) and for children with limited English proficiency (Title VII). The aim of this legislation was to insure an equal opportunity for instruction and learning for all students.

Sex Discrimination Law

In the area of sex discrimination, the courts have been slower to apply the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. Legally sanctioned differential treatment based on sex has a lengthy history. In Bradwell v. Illinois in 1873, a female attorney was denied admission to

different spheres of action and that it belonged to men to make, apply and execute the laws."

Not until 1971 did the U.S. Supreme Court decide that it was unconstitutional to discriminate against people according to their sex under certain circumstances. In Reed v. Reed, the Court invalidated a law that gave men preference over women as administrators of estates because it violated the guarantees of the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. The courts, however, have been very strict in their application of this amendment to sex discrimination cases, and since the Equal Rights Amendment has not been ratified, several federal laws have been the basis for attempting to guarantee women equal rights. In 1974, the Women's Educational Equity Act, an amendment to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, sought to provide assistance in promoting equity for women and girls.

Title VI and Title IX Court Decisions

Title VI and Title IX are very similar in the educational activities which they affect and the types of discrimination they prohibit. Below are two examples of key court decisions based on these laws.

- *Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964* (P.L. 88-352) prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin against students of any school receiving federal assistance.

  In Lau v. Nichols (1973) the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the San Francisco school system violated the 1964 Civil Rights Act by denying non-English speaking students of Chinese ancestry a meaningful opportunity to participate in the public educational program. The decision stated that providing students the same desks, books and teaching did not ensure that they received an equal educational opportunity, particularly if the students did not speak English. If English is the appropriate language of instruction, then measures had to be taken to ensure that English was taught to non-English or limited-English proficient students in order to access the educational opportunity provided them.

- *Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972* (P.L. 92-318) prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex against students of a school receiving federal financial assistance.

  The case of Brenden v. Minnesota State High School League (1972) clarified the rights of women to pursue equal athletic

opportunities. The U.S. Supreme Court ruled that Peggy Brenden was being discriminated against because she was not allowed to try out for and play on the boys' tennis team when her school did not provide comparable athletic opportunities for girls.

Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1988

In 1988, after four years of debate, Congress enacted the Civil Rights Restoration Act (CRRA) which restores the originally intended scope of the four statutes already in place to protect minorities, women, the elderly and the handicapped from federally subsidized discrimination. The Act is in reponse to a 1984 Supreme Court decision, Grove City v. Bell, in which the high court ruled that nondiscrimination laws applied only to specific programs or activities receiving federal financial assistance, not to an entire institution.